Operating a Lawn Mower
(push mower and riding mower)

Can youth do this job safely?

Youth must be able to do/have all of the following to perform this job safely:

- Avoid loose clothing, clothes with strings, tie up long hair
- Check and clear area of debris in path of mower
- Stay focused on task for up to 50 minutes
- Recognize a hazard, problem solve, and respond appropriately
- React quickly to hazards
- Mature enough to consistently do what is expected
- Think through actions and consequences before acting
- Good peripheral vision
- Reach and operate controls when standing behind push mower
- Strength to safely maneuver push mower
- Reach and repeatedly operate controls of riding mower without straining when seated and wearing seatbelt
- Use hands and feet simultaneously
- Safely demonstrate the job 4 to 5 times
- Comply with the working outdoors guideline
- Maintain two-way communication link



Adult Responsibilities

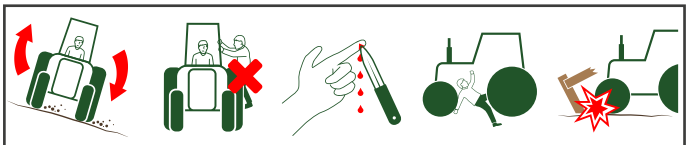
- Ensure mower is mechanically sound with safety features in place
- Verify area is clear of debris before mowing
- Ensure youth do not operate mower after dark or in bad weather
- Train youth to operate riding mower at low speed and on level ground
- Educate youth to mount riding mower using 3 points of contact
- Ensure work area is free from as many hazards as possible
- Educate youth on avoiding/addressing remaining hazards
- Demonstrate how to safely operate a lawn mower
- Provide appropriate training
- Train youth to call an adult if equipment malfunctions

Supervision

Note: Ensure riding mower is sized appropriately for youth. See Tractor Operations Chart for guidance.

12-13 yrs	Constant supervision progressing to periodic (no riding lawn mowers)
14-15 yrs	Intermittent supervision progressing to periodic
16+ yrs	Periodic supervision

Hazards



Rollover--rider Tip over--push | Extra riders | Sharp objects/ entanglement (mower blade) | Run-over | Collision

Protective Strategies



Non-skid shoes | Hearing protection | Eye protection | Operator's manual | ROPS and seatbelt (if present)



www.cultivatesafety.org

https://doi.org/10.21636/nfmc.nccrahs.youthwork.lawnmowers.g.2018